

WORK INABILITY AS PSYCHIC REACTION TO RECURRENT BREAST CANCER – A CLINICAL CASE

Tomislav Peharda

Department of psychiatry, General hospital Pula, Croatia

Introduction/Objectives: This is a case of 50-year-old patient with recurrence of breast carcinoma after 12 years, whose working ability is seriously undermined, developing dysfunctional behavior and reactive depressive disorder. She was treated with anti-depressive therapy, CBT and support therapy but her psychic state deteriorated in terms of anxious depressive elements development. She also felt constantly belittled at work, emphasizing non-understanding and psychic maltreatment by her colleagues.

Participants, Materials/Methods: Sooner, she was referred to the day-hospital in order to become aware of her own regressive position, strengthening of more mature defense mechanisms. In group dynamics she showed passive participation, rigid defense mechanisms, strong resistance against group work and only

partial participation in the analysis of intrapsychic conflict. The separation anxiety persisted after the group therapy had finished and it was recommended to her to repeat the group treatment since her work ability was not recovered.

Results: In spite of individual and group treatment, the patient has not succeeded to overcome emotional crisis and the related suppressed contents, which is partly due to objectively difficult work environment. Although in somatic remission, the patient has been unable to achieve healthy relationship reality due to secondary psychic reaction.

Conclusions: The case attempts to emphasize the importance of complex psychic dynamics as reaction to the malignant disease due to which a patient is getting increasingly unfit to socialize and to work